

**FINAL REPORT
OF THE
INTERIM STUDY COMMITTEE ON
THE HISTORY OF THE GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**



**Indiana Legislative Services Agency
200 W. Washington Street, Suite 301
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204**

November, 2001

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A copy of this report is available on the Internet. Reports, minutes, and notices are organized by committee. This report and other documents for this Committee can be accessed from the General Assembly Homepage at <http://www.state.in.us/legislative/>.

I. LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DIRECTIVE

The Legislative Council directed the Committee to develop a process for updating The Centennial History of the Indiana General Assembly, 1816-1978 (Indianapolis, 1987) and A Biographical Directory of the Indiana General Assembly, (Vol.I:1816-1899 published in 1980 and Vol. II: 1900-1984 published in 1984).

II. INTRODUCTION AND REASONS FOR STUDY

The Interim Study Committee on the History of the Indiana General Assembly was created to begin the process of updating the first history of the Indiana General and the biographical directory of the Indiana General Assembly.

III. SUMMARY OF WORK PROGRAM

The Committee met four times during the 2001 interim.

The Committee held its first meeting August 28, 2001. The Committee reviewed its charge from the Legislative Council, and discussed the history of the process which created the first history volume and biographical directory. Pam Bennett, executive director of the Indiana Historical Bureau, discussed the original legislative committee and the successor committees which worked on the publication of the earlier histories and historical biographies.

The Committee met again on September 13, 2001. At this meeting the Committee heard a presentation by Philip "Satch" Sachtleben and Jeannie Gerstbauer-Hill of the Legislative Services Agency (LSA) on the current work being done by LSA on a computer database biographical directory. The Committee also heard from Dr. Barbara Truesdell of the Indiana University Oral History Research Center, regarding the use of oral history as a supplement to written history. Also during the meeting the Committee viewed a videotape explaining the process and capabilities of print on demand printing.

The Committee's third meeting occurred on October 9, 2001. As a follow up to Committee requests for information, Philip Sachtleben and Jeannie Gerstbauer-Hill of LSA again appeared to discuss the computer biographical database and the use of technology for the overall project. The Committee then heard from Dr. James Madison of the Indiana University Department of History.

The Committee held its fourth and final meeting on October 31, 2001. At the final meeting the Committee approved PD 3518, which would create a select committee of legislators to oversee the history process. The Committee also approved this final report.

IV. SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY

Testimony consisted primarily of presentations from five individuals.

1) Pam Bennett, Indiana Historical Bureau.

At the first meeting of the Committee: Pam Bennett discussed the original legislative committee

and the successor committees that followed. She provided details on the hiring of the original historian and the change made to hire the author that eventually created the historical volume and directory. Ms. Bennett outlined the original printing process, and the problems that resulted. Ms. Bennett discussed the work of the author, Justin Walsh, and detailed the need to hire the right person for the job.

Ms. Bennett also discussed the funding of the original committee, and the public-private cooperation between the Lilly Foundation and the General Assembly that provided funding in the later years of the project. She outlined the format of the earlier history volumes, and described how key reference materials in the form of maps, charts and other data were included. On the issue of reference source material left from the initial history, Ms. Bennett stated that most of the material was located in files in the state library, but that some of the later computer tapes were housed at Indiana University-Bloomington. Ms. Bennett stated that decisions facing the Committee include providing for the computer data entry of the information in volume one of the historical biographies.

At the second meeting of the Committee: Pam Bennett provided a videotape concerning printing on demand.

2) Dr. Barbara Truesdell, Indiana University Oral Research Center.

At the second meeting of the Committee: Dr. Barbara Truesdell outlined what oral history is, and discussed the oral history compilation process. Dr. Truesdell described the benefits of oral history, and the balance of oral and written history. She then discussed the work of the Indiana University Oral History Research Center. In response to Committee questions, Dr. Truesdell informed the Committee that oral history could be kept confidential for a period of time, and that the actual oral history interviews were available only through the Research Center at IU. She said that the interviews are not available on the internet.

3) Dr. James Madison, Indiana University department of History.

At the third meeting of the Committee: Dr. James Madison discussed the scope and purpose of creating a historical work, the necessity of leaving a historical record about the General Assembly, and the tremendous need to disseminate historical information as widely as possible. Dr. Madison encouraged the Committee to use as many means of publication as possible, but emphasized the importance of the printed word in a handsome format. Dr. Madison urged that the work be done so that it explains the issues and process of the General Assembly to the average citizen in a way that makes the reader want to read. He commented that the next volume should not necessarily be a simple update of the previous history, but should instead be a self contained volume.

Dr. Madison discussed the need to make the book as marketable as possible. Dr. Madison stated that his key piece of advice is that the General Assembly hire the right author for the job, and suggested that the most important attributes of the next author should be the author's experience, perspective, education, and continuing education. Dr. Madison also reminded the Committee that the author will want absolute freedom in creating the history.

4) Philip Sachtleben and Jeannie Gerstbauer-Hill, Indiana Legislative Services Agency

At the second meeting of the Committee: Mr. Philip Sachtleben discussed the capabilities of LSA's in-house printing, and reviewed the cost savings created by the in-house printing. He also commented on the significant savings obtained through the use of cd-rom for the Acts of Indiana. Mr. Sachtleben discussed the creation and use of a biographical database of members of the Indiana General Assembly. Mr. Sachtleben and Ms. Jeanne Gerstbauer-Hill discussed the use of the database software and its compatibility with the internet. Ms. Gerstbauer-Hill led a discussion of the capabilities of the database software, and its potential for storing information. Mr. Sachtleben discussed the possibilities the database would provide for schools as learning tools and for research projects. He mentioned that one possibility is to have local schools research their past legislators to provide additional or missing information.

At the third meeting of the Committee: Ms. Gerstbauer-Hill informed the Committee of her discussions with Delia Cothrun Bourne, a librarian at the Reynolds Historical Genealogy Collection at the Allen County Public Library. Ms. Gerstbauer-Hill informed the Committee of concerns expressed by Ms. Bourne about security and having legislator's personal information published on the Internet.

Mr. Sachtleben addressed the issue of time lines for the completion of the biographical directory of the General Assembly. He outlined possible completion scenarios, and the computer program being used to create the database. Mr. Sachtleben discussed a memorandum prepared for the Committee which reviewed information on the changes in the General Assembly and extrapolated information about the possible numbers of biographical updates that would be required to biographies contained in the previously published volume.

Mr. Sachtleben discussed the concept that the work of the Committee could be separated into two assignments, the biographical directory and the completion of the history. Mr. Sachtleben stated that he believes LSA has the biographical directory well in hand, and that updates to the database directory would be able to be done as needed in the future.

Mr. Sachtleben assured the Committee that the duties of LSA would not suffer from any work on the database directory. Mr. Sachtleben credited Ms. Gerstbauer-Hill with a suggestion that session computer interns be used to help compile and enter information in the database during times when the interns are not otherwise engaged in computer duties. Responding to a question for an estimate of a completion date if it was up to LSA, Mr. Sachtleben said that he plans to have the biographical directory database completed within 12 months, meaning completion by the end of the 2002 interim.

V. COMMITTEE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee made the following findings of fact and recommendations:

FINDING # 1. History of the General Assembly.

The Committee finds that for the people to be best served by their representatives in government, the people must understand what their government is, and to know what their government is, they must

know what their government was. The Committee stated that a history of the General Assembly is vital for future generations of Hoosiers.

RECOMMENDATION #1. The history of the Indiana General Assembly must be updated.

The Committee recommends PD 3518 by a vote of 9-0. The PD does the following:

- 1) Provides for the creation of a history of the General Assembly.
- 2) Establishes a select committee of legislative members to oversee the:
 - (A) hiring of an author;
 - (B) appointment of an advisory council to assist the select committee; and
 - (C) administration of the process of creating the history.
- 3) Provides the history should cover approximately the period from the end of the 100th General Assembly to the adjournment sine die of the 113th General Assembly.
- 4) Specifies that funds appropriated in the 2001 budget for the update of the history of the General Assembly do not revert and may be used by the select committee.

FINDING #2. Oral history.

The Committee finds that oral histories are an important component of a historical record, and are a popular historical tool.

RECOMMENDATION #2. The select committee should consider an oral history.

The Committee recommends that the select committee earnestly consider including an oral history as a part of the history of the Indiana General Assembly, and further recommends that the committee should review the following "Proposal for the Oral History Portion of the History of the General Assembly, from the Indiana University Center for the Study of History and Memory":

Oral history, as defined by U.S. Senate Historian Donald Ritchie, collects memories and personal commentaries of historical significance through recorded interviews. It has become a necessary part of thorough historical research to interview the living witnesses or actors of an historical event or period. Oral history brings multiple voices into the construction of the historical narrative, providing fascinating insights and emotional depth to the subject under study.

The Center for the Study of History and Memory (CSHM) began as the Oral History Research Project in 1968 under the direction of Oscar O. Winther. Our founding was tied to a larger effort to write a history of the university itself. Over time, the center's work encompassed more of the state's history, including studies of Indiana political figures such as Homer Capehart, John Hurt, and William E. Jenner. The Center is now the most extensive oral history program in Indiana. Today, our mission incorporates archival, pedagogical, and research goals. First, we seek funds to support projects that preserve the oral record of Indiana and the Midwest. Second, we use the funding we receive to hire and train graduate students in oral history methodology and the study of social memory. Third, we contribute to the emerging scholarly study of memory—the process by which individuals use the past to make sense of their world. Finally, we foster the use of oral history in historical research through our training workshops, access to our archive of oral history interviews, and services provided by our web site.

The Center for the Study of History and Memory will conduct oral history interviews with members of the Indiana General Assembly identified by the project historian and the project's advisory committee. Researchers from the CSHM will collaborate with the project historian to develop the interview questions. Interviews will be conducted in accordance with Indiana University Human Subjects protocols, which insures the highest ethical standards are observed in our work. We will audiotape each interview and transcribe it verbatim. Other forms of recording, such as videotape or digital formats, may also be utilized pending approval by the project historian and

advisory committee. We will send the interview transcript to the interviewee for editing. Upon its return, we will do a final edit, add a table of contents, a photograph of the interviewee and an index to the interview, and bind the finalized interview. The project historian will receive these finalized transcripts to use as primary sources in the creation of the final product(s). Copies of the interviews, photos, and audiotapes will also be added to the CSHM archive.

The CSHM welcomes the opportunity to participate as a partner in this important historical research on the General Assembly and stands ready to assist the project historian and project advisory committee in this enterprise. The interviews we will conduct will add a human dimension to the historical facts of the assembly's work over this twenty-five year period. The interviews produced will not only offer important source data for the final product(s) of the project, but will provide valuable research materials for future generations of scholars of Indiana history.

FINDING #3. Biographical directory.

The Committee finds that there is a need to update and maintain on a continuing basis a biographical directory of the members of the Indiana General Assembly. The Committee learned that the Legislative Services Agency is in the process of compiling a digitized version of the biographical directory, and can have the directory completed by the end of the interim 2002.

RECOMMENDATION #3a. Urging LSA to continue directory work.

The Committee urges the Legislative Services Agency to:

- (1) continue its work on a digitized biographical directory;
- (2) publish in 2002 the biographical directory upon its completion to that date; and
- (3) maintain the biographical directory of future members of the General Assembly.

RECOMMENDATION #3b. Urging the Legislative Council to support LSA's work on the biographical directory.

The Committee urges the Legislative Council to provide to the Legislative Services Agency all resources necessary to allow LSA to complete, publish, and then maintain the biographical directory of the Indiana General Assembly.

WITNESS LIST

Pamela Bennett, executive director of the Indiana Historical Bureau

Jeannie Gerstbauer-Hill, Indiana Legislative Services Agency

James Madison, Indiana University department of history

Philip Sachtleben, executive director of the Indiana Legislative Services Agency

Barbara Truesdell, Indiana University Oral History Research Center